



**UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
REGION 10**

1200 Sixth Avenue, Suite 900
Seattle, Washington 98101-3140

OFFICE OF
COMPLIANCE AND ENFORCEMENT

Reply To: OCE-133

[First Name] [Last Name]
[Address]
[City], [State] [Zip]

Re: Suction Dredging in Waters of the United States

Dear Gold Prospector:

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is aware that you may have operated or have plans to operate a suction dredge in an Idaho stream or river. Please be advised that, pursuant to Section 402 of the Clean Water Act (CWA), an individual must obtain a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit to discharge pollutants such as rock and sand from a suction dredge into a water of the United States. Failure to obtain an NPDES permit or failure to comply with the terms of an NPDES permit is a violation of the CWA.

The EPA issued the Small Suction Dredge General NPDES Permit (Permit) on April 4, 2013, allowing individuals who operate a suction dredge to obtain coverage under the Permit when discharging to certain waterbodies in Idaho. To obtain Permit coverage, an individual must submit a Notice of Intent (NOI) and receive written authorization from the EPA that the activity is covered by the Permit. More information can be found at: <http://yosemite.epa.gov/r10/water.nsf/NPDES+Permits/idsuction-gp>.

Although an individual may have obtained a "letter permit" from the Idaho Department of Water Resources allowing the permit holder to operate recreational mining equipment that alters a stream channel, an NPDES permit must also be obtained that authorizes the discharge of pollutants from suction dredging.

If you have questions about how to apply for permit coverage, please contact Tracy DeGering at 208-378-5756 or by email at degering.tracy@epa.gov. If you have questions regarding your compliance with the Clean Water Act, please contact Eva DeMaria at 206-553-1970 or by email at demaria.eva@epa.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jeff KenKnight". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Jeff KenKnight, Manager
NPDES Compliance Unit

